



Green Star Fitouts

For retail brands



JUNE 2026



Founded by the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) in 2003, Green Star is an internationally recognised rating system setting the standard for healthy, resilient, positive buildings and places.

Using Green Star, the New Zealand Green Building Council has certified hundreds of buildings, interiors and precincts across Aotearoa, driving better buildings for today and tomorrow.



Reducing the impact of climate change



Enhancing our health and quality of life



Restoring and protecting our planet's biodiversity and ecosystems



Driving resilience in buildings, fitouts and communities



Contributing to market transformation and a sustainable economy

Retail fitouts do more than shape how a store looks

They communicate what your brand stands for — often long before a customer picks up a product. Every material, finish and design decision sends a signal about quality, care and credibility. Yet behind the shopfront, fitouts can also carry hidden impacts that quietly erode trust over time.

Fitouts are among the fastest-growing sources of carbon in buildings¹, generate substantial waste² and, when poorly designed, can create unhealthy and uncomfortable environments that can reduce dwell time, erode staff performance and quietly affect the bottom line.³

For years, these impacts sat outside the spotlight. But as expectations rise around circularity, climate performance and healthier interiors, these once-hidden impacts can no longer be overlooked.

Green Star Fitouts provides a practical way forward

Green Star Fitouts offers a clear, practical framework to guide better fitout decisions from the outset — helping brands deliver stores that are healthier, lower-carbon, lower-waste and designed to adapt. Spaces that support trust, not just transactions.

Whether you're creating a flagship, rolling out stores at scale or refreshing existing locations, Green Star Fitouts helps brands transform fitout decisions into long-term brand value — creating stores that feel better, perform better and stand for something more.

At the New Zealand Green Building Council, we see every day that high-performing interiors never have to compromise great design. The most inspiring spaces can also be healthier, lower-impact and future-ready — delivering better outcomes for today, and tomorrow.

Green Star Fitouts Better fitouts, today and tomorrow

Country Road Chatswood Chase, NSW,
Country Road, Targeting a
5 Star Green Star, Fitouts rating v1

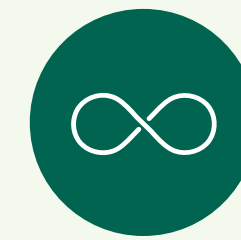




Green Star Fitouts: a framework for better interiors

Green Star Fitouts helps retail brands turn sustainability commitments into visible, credible action in-store. With a practical framework focused on six key impact areas, it enables teams to deliver lower-carbon, lower-waste and healthier stores — strengthening brand trust while embedding consistency across portfolios.

The six foundations of better fitouts



Circular

Embeds circularity enablers throughout the design and construction of the fitout.



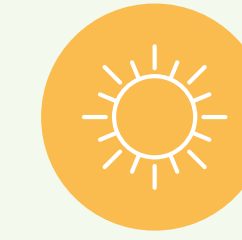
Responsible

Recognises activities that ensure the fitout is designed, procured, built, and handed over in a responsible manner.



Healthy

Promotes actions and solutions that improve the physical and mental health of occupants.



Positive

Encourages a positive contribution to key environmental issues of carbon, water, and the impact of materials.



People

Encourages solutions that address the social health of occupants.



Leadership

Recognises projects that set a strategic direction, build a vision for industry, or enhance the industry's capacity to innovate.

Brand reputation

Today, the carbon, waste and health impacts of fitouts can't be ignored. Expectations are rising, trust is fragile, and scrutiny around sustainability and greenwashing is intensifying.

Store environments are no longer judged on aesthetics alone — they're seen as a reflection of brand values and a way to show that sustainability commitments are real.

Country Road Chadstone, VIC, Country Road,
5 Star Green Star – Interiors rating v1.3

Waste

85% of Australians are concerned about the amount of waste and consumption in society⁸

78% want to see clear evidence of environmental improvement driven by real action¹⁴

82% of Australians remain sceptical about social and environmental claims⁴

71% of respondents stated they would permanently lose trust in a brand if it became clear that the company placed profits above people¹⁵



Evidence from completed Green Star Interiors projects shows the cost uplift is modest and predictable, even at higher certification levels.

Typical share of total project budget associated with Green Star certification:

4%

Reducing cost through better fitout design

For retail brands, fitout decisions affect cost — not just at delivery, but every time a store is refreshed or rolled out again. More adaptable, durable fitouts are easier to update, cost less to run, and stay fit for purpose as formats evolve. Green Star Fitouts provides clear direction to support these outcomes.

How Green Star Fitouts helps reduce cost:



Reduce upfront spend through smarter reuse

The framework helps teams identify where existing materials, furniture and equipment can be retained or reused before purchasing new, helping lower procurement costs and reduce demolition and disposal expenses.



Design spaces that can evolve with changing needs

Guidance on flexible layouts, maintainable materials and adaptable systems helps reduce the need for major interventions as stores evolve with changing layouts, branding or tenancy requirements. This supports lower churn costs and fewer costly fitout refreshes over time.



Lower operating costs through efficient systems

Direct with water-efficient fixtures and tenancy-level metering, helps brands better manage energy and water use — on energy-efficient lighting, equipment and HVAC, along reducing ongoing bills and improving operational efficiency.

The in-store experience

Materials, lighting, layout and finishes shape comfort, wellbeing and the overall feel of a space — influencing how long customers stay, how staff experience their work, and how a store performs. Experience drives performance. For every 1% increase in customer dwell time, sales rise by 1.3%.³

How a fitout shapes the in-store experience:



Air quality

Fitout materials can emit VOCs long after installation, affecting indoor air quality. These compounds can irritate the eyes, skin and airways and cause headaches and fatigue for staff and customers.¹³



Lighting

Lighting shapes mood, comfort and product perception¹¹. Fitout decisions affect access to daylight, with well-lit stores linked to longer dwell time and stronger sales.³



Acoustics

Partitions, ceilings, flooring and layout shape how sound is experienced in-store. Poor acoustics can create noisy, stressful spaces that can shorten dwell time and affect staff comfort.³



Layout

Clear layouts and intuitive circulation make stores easier to navigate and more enjoyable to spend time in. Fitout design shapes how customers move, pause and interact — influencing both experience and efficiency.³



Thermal Comfort

Fitout layouts, partitions and equipment can disrupt airflow, creating hot or cold zones throughout a store. Poor thermal comfort increases fatigue, shortens browsing time and makes stores less comfortable places to work.³



Biophilia

Fitout choices that incorporate greenery, natural textures and restorative elements have been shown to increase dwell time by up to 279%, and slow walking speeds by 12.2%¹² — creating calmer, more browsing-friendly stores.

Carbon

Retail fitouts play a far bigger role in carbon emissions than most people realise.

Unlike a building's structure and facade, fitouts are replaced far more frequently. Most retail stores are refurbished every 6–8 years, with shopping-centre tenancies often refreshed even sooner — typically every 3–4 years.⁵ Each refurbishment locks embodied carbon into materials such as flooring, finishes and fixtures, only for much of it to be stripped out after a short period of use⁵

Because fitout materials and construction sit largely within a brand's control, the impact of these decisions compounds quickly as stores are refreshed, relocated or rolled out at scale.

DISSH Bondi, NSW, DISSH,
4 Star Green Star, Interiors rating v1.3



Carbon: unlocking lower carbon interiors

Green Star Fitouts provides clear, practical guidance to help retail brands reduce the carbon impact of their stores — supporting lower Scope 3 emissions across fitouts and helping brands meet climate and ESG commitments with confidence.

How Green Star Fitouts helps you reduce carbon



Reduce upfront carbon through design and material decisions

The framework sets clear targets for lowering upfront carbon early in design — while giving teams the flexibility to choose materials and solutions that suit their store format, rollout model and brand expression.



Extend material life to minimise repeated emissions

Guidance sets clear targets that steer project teams toward interiors that adapt more easily and minimise replacement cycles — reducing the repeated embodied carbon impacts of fitouts over a building's life.



Energy efficiency reduces operational cost

Green Star Fitouts guides teams on how to eliminate fossil fuels, use high-efficiency systems and transition to renewable energy in areas under the tenant's control. This directly reduces operational emissions while helping tenants meet their climate commitments.

Waste

Every retail fitout creates waste — not because materials are worn out, but because the store changes.

When layouts shift, leases end or branding evolves, fitouts are stripped out long before materials reach the end of their useful life. Flooring, joinery, fixtures and ceilings are routinely removed and discarded, even when they are still in good condition.⁵

For retail brands, this waste isn't a one-off event. It's repeated with every refurbishment, relocation or rollout — multiplying the impact across a portfolio.



Circularity: designing retail interiors that reduce waste and adapt over time

Green Star Fitouts gives retail brands clear direction on how to support more circular fitouts — reducing waste, extending the life of materials and fixtures and staying ahead of tightening circularity expectations.

How Green Star Fitouts supports circular retail fitouts



Keep materials in use for longer

Green Star Fitouts helps teams identify what can be reused by setting clear targets and providing consistent ways to measure and calculate circular outcomes. This reduces unnecessary replacement cycles, a major driver of waste and embodied carbon in retail fitouts.



Design for adaptability, not demolition

Green Star Fitouts provides direction on how to embed flexibility through modular systems, multifunctional layouts and adaptable service models. This helps fitouts evolve over time without generating large volumes of waste during every change of needs.



Enable future reuse from the start

Green Star Fitouts sets clear expectations for documenting fitout components through digital asset registers, helping today's store become a resource for future fitouts. This supports material recovery and keeps valuable products in circulation rather than sent to landfill.



Choose responsible products

Green Star Fitouts includes practical tools to help teams select responsibly manufactured products and maximise resource recovery during delivery. This removes guesswork and gives brands confidence that products meet clear, credible standards — supporting both circularity goals and brand trust.

Choosing responsible products with confidence

One of the biggest challenges in any fitout is knowing which materials are genuinely responsible. With thousands of products on the market — and rising scrutiny around greenwashing — project teams often struggle to identify options that have a lower environmental impact, are transparent, respect human rights and support a circular economy.

The Responsible Products framework provides a clear, structured way to navigate this complexity. Through the Responsible Products score checker, teams can search recognised product certification initiatives and understand how certified products score against Green Star requirements.

This makes it far easier to identify materials that are environmentally responsible, transparent, ethically produced and circular — and, in turn, secure the Green Star points needed to achieve certification.

Unlocking opportunities through certification

Certification strengthens everything you deliver through Green Star Fitouts, assessed by external expert assessors. Here are four opportunities you unlock only with certification:



Easier, more robust reporting

Independent certification provides clear, structured documentation aligned to recognised standards — supporting ESG reporting, investor disclosure and internal governance. It simplifies evidence gathering and strengthens the credibility of what you report.



Reduced reputational risk

In a market increasingly scrutinising sustainability claims, independent certification protects your reputation. It ensures every claim is credible, verified and defensible.



Stronger alignment across stakeholders

Certification establishes a clear, shared benchmark for success. For retail brands, this means smoother delivery, fewer surprises, and greater confidence that fitout decisions are delivering the outcomes you intend.



Verified sustainability leadership

Certification shows that sustainability is a genuine priority — embedded in how you operate, not simply expressed in messaging. It aligns your brand with independently verified performance at a time when the market expects nothing less.



Country Road Chatswood Chase, NSW.
Country Road, Targeting a 5 Star Green
Star, Fitouts rating v1

How to apply Green Star Fitouts to your next store

Green Star Fitouts is designed to work whether you're delivering a single store or managing fitouts across a retail network. Brands can apply it in the way that best suits their format, scale and rollout strategy.



Country Road, Chatswood Chase, Sydney, Targeting a 5 Star Green Star, Fitouts rating v1.

Apply Green Star Fitouts to a single store

If you're designing, refurbishing or relocating one store, Green Star Fitouts can be used as a one-off framework. It guides decisions from design through delivery, giving confidence that the store meets best-practice standards for sustainability, health and performance streamline documentation.

This approach is ideal for:

- A flagship store
- A major store refurbishment or relocation
- Piloting a more sustainable, higher-performing store format

Apply Green Star Fitouts across multiple projects

For brands managing multiple locations or national rollouts, Green Star Fitouts can be applied consistently across many stores. This supports a repeatable approach to fitouts, helping reduce variation, embed clear expectations and lift performance over time.

This approach is ideal for:

- National or regional store networks
- Rolling store refresh or rollout programs
- Standardising sustainability, wellbeing and brand outcome across locations



Image courtesy of Interface

How Green Star Fitouts works

Meeting the minimum expectations is all that's needed to certify to Green Star Fitouts.



Meet Minimum Expectations

All Green Star Fitouts projects must meet a set of Minimum Expectations. These establish a strong baseline — ensuring the fitout maximises opportunities to integrate reused products, delivers higher performance in energy, water and health, and aligns with key outcomes of the Climate Positive Pathway.



Deliver on the Net Zero Ready Pathway

Projects must achieve a set of required credits that drive meaningful reductions in upfront and operational emissions. This supports retail brands in managing the carbon impacts of fitouts, including scope 3 emissions.



Achieve additional points

Beyond the required elements, projects target additional credits to reach their desired rating. Brands choose the focus areas most relevant to their priorities — whether that's carbon reduction, circularity, health and wellbeing, responsible materials, cost efficiency, or a combination of these.



What every Green Star Fitout must deliver

At the heart of Green Star Fitouts are a set of Minimum Expectations. Together, these create a consistent baseline that supports organisational climate goals, improves occupant experience and reduces environmental and operational impact. Every certified project must demonstrate it meets these expectations.



Identify opportunities to include reused elements in the fitout



Be verified to work and be maintainable over time



Provide good lighting and acoustic comfort



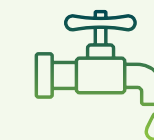
Be fully electric



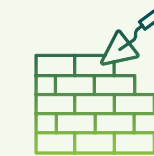
Be designed to consider the diverse needs of our population



Provide improved air quality and ensures procurement of low toxin materials



Be water and energy efficient



Ensure almost all materials are low toxin



Have lower upfront carbon



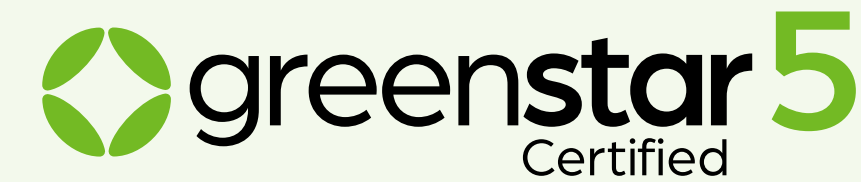
Implement site practices that support a reduction in wasted materials.

Understanding the ratings

Green Star Fitouts offers three rating levels, providing flexibility depending on the ambition and scale of the project. Projects can also choose to obtain a Green Star Designed assessment, which demonstrates they are on track to achieve certification.



A 4 Star rated fitout is Best Practice compared to industry standard



A 5 Star rated fitout demonstrates New Zealand Excellence



A 6 Star rated fitout showcases World Leadership.

1 Minimum Expectations



2 Net Zero Ready Pathway



Net Zero Ready Pathway



Net Zero Ready Pathway

3 Credit achievements



Must achieve 20 points from a range of credits



Must achieve 45 points from a range of credits



Better together: How all four Green Star rating tools strengthen your asset

When used together, Green Star Fitouts, Green Star Performance and Green Star Buildings create a connected, end-to-end approach to sustainability for your brand.



Green Star Fitouts focuses on the interior spaces people use every day — ensuring they are healthy, low-impact and ready to adapt as needs change.



Green Star Performance supports ongoing operational excellence, helping buildings continue to perform as intended over time.



Green Star Buildings ensures the base building is designed and delivered to a high standard of sustainability and performance.

Together, these tools provide tenants with confidence that their stores sits within a broader, best-practice sustainability framework — supporting people, performance and credibility, today and into the future.



CASE STUDY

Country Road Newmarket

Country Road Newmarket, the brand's flagship store in Aotearoa, is the first Country Road store in New Zealand to achieve a 5 Star Green Star Interiors rating. The 800m² fitout demonstrates how premium retail environments can successfully combine sustainability, customer wellbeing and thoughtful design.

As part of Country Road's wider sustainability programme, the project challenged the team to reduce waste, prioritise material reuse and select more sustainable products throughout the fitout.

Recycled materials feature prominently, including wall cladding made from recycled paper, plastics created from recycled yoghurt pots, carpet manufactured from recycled yarn and curtains produced from recycled polyester. The result is a welcoming, accessible retail environment that supports both customer comfort and staff wellbeing, while helping educate shoppers about sustainability through in-store design and material storytelling.

[READ THE FULL CASE STUDY](#)



Country Road Newmarket fitout, Auckland,
Country Road, 5 Star Green Star Interiors rating v1.0

“We hoped to embrace our customers by taking them on the journey with us, ensuring they feel cared for, comfortable and inspired. Throughout the retail areas, signage identifies environmental attributes of the relevant materials to inform, educate and excite our customers.”

— Anne Meagher-Whiting, Store Design Manager, Country Road